

5. The catheter apparatus defined in claim 1 wherein said catheter comprises a medical grade polymer comprising a preselected degree of wall stiffness to resist crushing when said distal end is clamped to said cystic duct.

6. The catheter apparatus defined in claim 5 wherein said polymer comprises a preselected degree of compliant memory to accommodate said catheter being capable of retaining a preselected degree of curvature.

7. The catheter apparatus defined in claim 5 wherein said medical grade polymer comprising PVC having a preselected degree of minimal slipperiness to facilitate maintenance of said catheter tip at a predetermined insertion depth.

8. A cholangiography catheter for use during laparoscopic surgery comprising:

a catheter comprising a radiolucent, medical grade plastic, said plastic comprising a compliant memory, said catheter comprising a distal end and a proximal end, said distal end comprising indicia to provide a visual indication of the depth of insertion of said distal end;

a connector coupled in fluid communication to said proximal end of said catheter, said connector comprising a saline arm and a dye arm;

a saline tubing having a distal end and a proximal end and coupled in fluid communication to said saline arm at said distal end;

a dye tubing having a distal end and a proximal end and coupled in fluid communication to said dye arm at said distal end;

a saline check valve mounted in fluid communication to said proximal end of said saline tubing;

a dye check valve mounted in fluid communication to said proximal end of said dye tubing;

a saline syringe releasably mountable to said saline check valve; and

a dye syringe releasably mountable to said dye check valve.

9. The cholangiography catheter defined in claim 8 wherein said connector includes an access port comprising an opening having a sliding seal and a removable cover for said access port, said access port providing access for a guide wire to be directed into said catheter with said sliding seal providing a sealing relationship between said access port and said guide wire.

10. The cholangiography catheter defined in claim 8 wherein said saline check valve is color coordinated with said saline syringe using a first color and said dye check valve is color coordinated with said dye syringe using a second color.

11. The cholangiography catheter defined in claim 8 wherein said saline tubing comprises a first length and said dye tubing comprises a second length.

12. The cholangiography catheter defined in claim 8 wherein said catheter comprises a radiopaque stripe along its length.

13. A method for introducing a contrast medium to a cystic duct during laparoscopic cholangiography comprising:

obtaining a catheter having a proximal end and a distal end, said catheter comprising a medical grade polymer having a preselected degree of compliant memory;

mounting a connector in fluid communication to said proximal end of said catheter, said connector comprising a saline arm and a dye arm, said saline arm connected in fluid communication to a saline check valve through a saline tubing, said dye arm connected in fluid communication to a dye check valve through a dye tubing;

filling a dye syringe with dye and attaching said dye syringe to said dye check valve and flushing said dye tubing and said dye arm;

filling a saline syringe with saline and attaching said saline syringe to said saline check valve and flushing said saline tubing and said catheter with said saline; and

inserting said distal end of said catheter into said cystic duct and injecting said dye from said dye syringe into said cystic duct.

14. The method defined in claim 13 wherein said obtaining step includes placing indicia on said distal end of said catheter for providing a visual indicator of the depth of insertion of said distal end of said catheter during said inserting step.

15. The method defined in claim 13 wherein said inserting step comprises selectively conforming said distal end of said catheter using said compliant memory prior to inserting said distal end of said catheter into said cystic duct.

16. The method defined in claim 13 wherein said mounting step includes forming an access port in said connector for a guide wire and placing a sliding seal in said access port, said inserting step including introducing a guide wire into said catheter.

17. The method defined in claim 13 wherein said mounting step includes color coordinating said saline check valve with said saline syringe using a first color and said dye check valve with said dye syringe using a second color.

18. The method defined in claim 17 wherein said dye tubing includes a stripe of said second color to distinguish said dye tubing from said saline tubing under low level light conditions.

19. The method defined in claim 13 wherein said inserting step includes providing a sharpened needle and a sheath slidably mounted to said needle, said needle puncturing the abdominal wall and placing said sheath in said abdominal wall, said needle being removable to leave said sheath temporarily in said abdominal wall, said sheath providing an access for passing said catheter through said abdominal wall, and retracting said sheath toward said proximal end of said catheter when said catheter has been inserted through said abdominal wall.

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